



YOPOUGON: BECOMING AN EDUCATIONAL AND CREATIVE CITY THROUGH SOCIAL COHESION



AGENDA 2030 - SDGs

5

GENDER
EQUALITY



8

DECENT WORK AND
ECONOMIC GROWTH



9

INDUSTRY INNOVATION
AND INFRASTRUCTURE



11

SUSTAINABLE CITIES
AND COMMUNITIES



CULTURE 21 ACTIONS - COMMITMENTS

1. CULTURAL RIGHTS
3. CULTURE AND EDUCATION
5. CULTURE AND ECONOMY
9. GOVERNANCE OF CULTURE

SOCIAL, INCLUSION, PARTICIPATION, ECONOMIC, DEVELOPMENT,
EDUCATION, CREATIVITY, CREATIVE INDUSTRIES, YOUTH, JOBS

1. Context

Yopougon is the largest commune in the Côte d'Ivoire and one of the 13 communes in the District of Abidjan. With a surface area of 153 Km², it was created in 1970 within the framework of an urban planning project to balance the sprawl of Abidjan. It is composed of residential areas and zones of economic activity, which absorbed the traditional villages without eradicating their socio-political and cultural organisation.

With a population of around two million inhabitants, Yopougon is home to an industrial zone that attracted populations coming as a result of the internal rural exodus and West-African migratory flows. It is the primary cultural centre of Abidjan. It boasts the highest rate of educational establishments and a multitude of artists, associations and self-employed entrepreneurs that play a key role in the cultural dynamic. Despite these assets, the economic crisis of the 1990s and the politico-military crises of 2000 and 2011 threatened Yopougon's cohesion.

2. Yopougon and culture

Cultural decentralisation is recent in the Côte d'Ivoire, it began in 2003. In 2014, the Côte d'Ivoire developed a national cultural policy document aiming to safeguard national cultural heritage and professionalise the arts and culture sector, with a view to place culture at the centre of development strategies. Since 2015, the City Council has taken these guidelines into account in its local development strategy.

THROUGH EDUCATIONAL AND CREATIVE PROGRAMMES FOCUSING ON SOCIAL COHESION AND THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL INCLUSION OF YOUNG PEOPLE AND DISADVANTAGED GROUPS, THE PROGRAMME PLACES THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF ALL AT THE HEART OF ITS WORK.

Today, the Commune's challenge is to implement these sectoral policies and educational and creative cultural programmes in order to respond to the policy priorities of its human, urban and economic development. This concerns young people and their artistic, civic, technical and professional training; the development of creativity and job creation within a dynamic that strengthens social cohesion, and equal access to local facilities, including in precarious neighbourhoods. In the sectoral plan, the priorities for 2020 are the policies and programmes for the development of reading, the promotion of the performing arts and the revision of the 2011 cultural strategy, in the light of digitalisation and the SDGs.

3. Project goals and implementation

3.1. Main and specific objectives

The aim of the action plan is to make Yopougon an educational, creative and inclusive city. In a context where action has been sporadic, it aims to drive a shift in paradigm to make culture the linchpin of innovation in municipal action, in conjunction with all the economic, social, environmental and cultural challenges of sustainable urban development.

The "Yopougon: Becoming an educational and creative city through social cohesion" programme places the inclusion of the most vulnerable people, the human, economic, social and cultural rights of all, and the development of a spirit of initiative and solidarity at the heart of its action.



The programme aims to achieve the following specific goals:

- Strengthen social cohesion through the socio-cultural activities carried out by youth, women's and neighbourhood associations.
- Regenerate the city by renovating and building socio-cultural infrastructures to facilitate access to education, culture and income-generating activities.
- Strengthen groups of culture professionals and youth and women's associations through training and information actions, and the provision of workspaces.

THE CHALLENGE IS TO IMPLEMENT EDUCATIONAL AND CREATIVE POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES TO ADDRESS ITS HUMAN, URBAN AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN AN ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND MANNER.

3.2. Project development

The implementation of Yopougon's vision of cultural development is currently structured in three phases. The first phase consisted in the study of the context, the identification of resources and potentialities and the development of a strategic plan to enhance Yopougon's cultural and touristic resources. The second phase began in 2013 with the implementation of two structuring sub-programmes for the provision of cultural services to the population and the structuring of the Department for Socio-Cultural Affairs. It is being undertaken in parallel with the third phase, initiated in 2019, which focuses on the strengthening of cultural actors and CSOs.

Beneficiary population

The programme's priority targets are: 1- young people, who make up 56% of the population; 2- disadvantaged groups who do not have the means of access to culture and education, in particular, women and people with disabilities; 3- the programme is secondarily aimed at the whole population with regard to leisure and cultural activities.



“GENERATION POSITIVE” AIMS TO PROTECT SOCIAL COHESION BY UPGRADING TWENTY LOCAL CULTURAL SPACES AND FACILITATING THE INCORPORATION OF SIXTY YOUNG PEOPLE FROM DISADVANTAGED NEIGHBOURHOODS TO THE ARTS.

Main actions developed

Sub-programme I: Strengthening of social cohesion through socio-cultural actions:

- a. Project to strengthen the communes of Abobo and Yopougon in the promotion of social cohesion (COSAY 2013-2016).
- b. Project to Support Reconciliation and Social Cohesion through Socio-Cultural Activities (PARCS 2014-2016).
- c. Project to strengthen Yopougon’s local spaces and the youth “Generation Positive” (Génération Positiv) 2018-2020.

Sub-programme II: Urban regeneration for the renovation and construction of socio-cultural infrastructures:

- a. Médiathèque Maison des Jeunes et des Savoirs (MSJ) [Knowledge and Youth Centre Media Library].
- b. Tiers-lieu – YOP-Crealab (2017- 2021).
- c. Centre for performing arts and music.

4. Impact

4.1. Direct impacts

Impact on local government

- Paradigm shift from sporadic action to a concerted, long-term strategy.
- Commitment of local elected officials driven by the strong political will of the mayor and convinced by the implementation of the Strategic Plan for the Development of the socio-cultural potentialities of Yopougon.
- Regular allocation of funding for the implementation of major projects.

- Investment of almost one million euros in activities and infrastructure for the period 2015-2021.
- Multi-year partnerships with UNESCO, the OIF and the AIMF, the Japanese and European Cooperation and international NGOs.
- Strong participation of the cultural actors of the territory: artists, municipal services, schools, literacy associations, communal youth council and associations of women traders.

THE NEW APPROACH HAS PROMOTED THE RECOGNITION OF CULTURAL ACTORS, YOUTH ASSOCIATIONS AND WOMEN'S GROUPS, AS WELL AS A BETTER CONSIDERATION OF THEIR ASPIRATIONS AND DIFFICULTIES, THUS STRENGTHENING THE YOUTH AND WOMEN'S ASSOCIATIONS INVOLVED IN THE VARIOUS PROJECTS.

Impact on the city and its population

- Recognition of cultural actors, youth associations and women's groups
- Strengthening of youth and women's associations involved in the various projects.

4.2. Evaluation

The key projects of the Programme "Yopougon: Becoming an educational and creative city through social cohesion" have been carried out thanks to international partnerships, which have undertaken the definition of logical frameworks and indicators, monitoring, and arrangements for mid-term reviews and evaluations at the end of each project.

In view of the large number of specific objectives and indicators, each phase of the programme was carried out in accordance with the principles adopted during the preparation of the evaluation and indicators.

To measure the indicators identified, monitoring and information-gathering charts were prepared, as were interviews with beneficiary representatives, meeting reports and activity progress reports.

4.3. Key factors

Internal factors:

- Strong political will.
- Regular and secure availability of financial resources.
- Qualification and commitment of staff.
- Multi-year plans anticipating needs and with partnership strategies.
- Owned financial resources.
- Participatory approach.
- Cross-cutting approach of policies.

Factors linked to project management:

- Definition of logical frameworks with shared and adaptable calendars.
- Development of technical partnerships with universities, CSOs, the private sector, foundations, Government departments and agencies.
- Use of international and national benchmarks to facilitate the search for funding and synergies with existing programmes.
- Adoption of an approach based on results and cultural rights, and management on the basis of clearly defined indicators.

4.4. Continuity

Exchanges of trainers and activities will be carried out between Yopougon's YOP-Creallab and Abobo's Babylab towards digital production, with a focus on children and young people.

The mediators trained within the framework of "Generation Positive" will be involved in the future activities of the YOP-Creallab by its founding partners. The mediation activities related to reading and the creation of a management association for the MSJ guarantee the sustainability of their action. The City Council plans to include operating aid in the structure of its annual budget.

5. Further information

Yopougon was a candidate for the fourth "UCLG Mexico City – Culture 21 International Award" (November 2019 – May 2020). The jury for the award drew up its final report in July of 2020, and requested that the Committee on Culture promote this project as one of the good practices to be implemented through Agenda 21 for culture.

This article was written by Léopoldine Kotchi, director of socio-cultural affairs, Abidjan, Yopougon, Ivory Coast.

Contact: leokotchi@gmail.com

Website: www.yopougon.ci